

when we once again commemorate the Genocide of the Armenians, I hope their descendants will be living in peace with their neighbors, building a democratic, prosperous country that will be a light unto the world.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the ninetieth anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. On the night of April 24, 1915, the Ottoman Empire arrested over 200 Armenian community leaders in Constantinople, thereby marking only the beginning of the horrendous Armenian Genocide to come.

On the eve of World War I, an estimated two million Armenians lived in the Ottoman Empire. Well over a million were deported and hundreds of thousands were simply killed. Between 1915 and 1918, the Ottoman Empire conducted other atrocities against Armenians which also included abduction, torture, massacre and starvation. Armenians living in Armenia and Anatolia were forcibly moved to Syria, where they were left in the desert to die of hunger and thirst. In addition, there were systematic murders; women and children were abducted from their homes and abused. It has been estimated that one and half million Armenians died as a result of this genocide from 1915 to 1923. By 1923 the entire landmass of Asia Minor and historic West Armenia had been expunged of its Armenian population.

On this important anniversary, it is a lasting lesson to people everywhere that genocide must not only be opposed by all nations, but that it must be universally recognized as a crime against humanity—no matter where it occurs or against whom it is carried out.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Armenian genocide, during which one and a half million Armenians were tortured and murdered, and more than half a million were forced from their homeland into exile. Despite overwhelming documentation, the Turkish government has refused to admit or apologize for these atrocious acts, or even acknowledge the Armenian Genocide.

As Americans, we must guarantee that our foreign policy reflects our values of justice, equality and responsibility. These values should apply in all of our international interactions, including those with Turkey, a NATO ally. Turkey wishes to increase its global profile through accession to organizations such as the European Union. However, if Turkey wishes to gain the world's respect, it must earn it. It must demonstrate its commitment to peace and democracy in the region. It must reopen its borders, end its blockade of Armenia, and encourage Azerbaijan to end its aggressive rhetoric. And most importantly, it must accept responsibility for past injustices through an unconditional recognition of the Armenian Genocide. Only then can Turkey begin to come to terms with its history. Only then can Armenians seek justice from the Turkish government for the losses of so much and so many.

Last month, I was honored to lead a conference session for Rhode Island students in which we discussed the genocide and what steps our government should take to recognize that tragedy appropriately. I think practically every student present that morning was amazed that, despite overwhelming evidence and widespread support, Congress has not yet passed the genocide resolution. It is time for Congress and the White House to speak with one voice and ensure that our national ideals

are reflected in our foreign policy. Consequently, I joined many of my colleagues in asking the President to recognize the Armenian Genocide in unambiguous terms, and I will again cosponsor the Genocide Resolution when it is reintroduced in the coming weeks.

As an ardent supporter of Rhode Island's Armenian-American community throughout my public service career, I am proud to join my colleagues to today in honoring the victims of the genocide by paying tribute to their memory, showing compassion for those who have suffered from such prejudice, and never forgetting the pain that they have endured.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, for the past nine years, I have come to the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives to honor and remember the genocide perpetrated against the Armenian people by the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the 20th Century.

This year marks the 90th Anniversary of these heinous acts, which drove so many survivors to the distant shores of the United States. Those of us in central Massachusetts have learned the story of the Armenian Genocide from our friends, neighbors and colleagues who are direct survivors, or the children and grandchildren of those survivors.

I have been privileged to participate in many of the annual remembrances of the Armenian Genocide held in Worcester, Massachusetts, at the Armenian Church of Our Savior, one of the oldest Armenian churches and congregations in America.

But I feel more privileged to have worked with the Armenian community in Worcester to educate the community, and especially young people and college students, about not only the Armenian Genocide, but about other contemporary and even current genocides that are taking place around the world. I am especially grateful that I will be able to collaborate with them in the future on events that will focus on the genocide in Darfur, Sudan.

May we all live to see and celebrate the day when we commemorate the Armenian Genocide in a world where genocides no longer take place against any people.

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GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order on the Armenian genocide.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCCAUL of Texas). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

HONORING ATHENS, TEXAS, MAYOR JERRY KING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the exceptional leadership, character, and outstanding achievements of my dear friend, Mayor Jerry King of Athens, Texas. After an

unprecedented five terms in office and 10 years of exceptional service, Mayor King has decided to step down as mayor. His decision is truly a loss to the citizens of Athens, Texas.

A responsive and fiscally responsible leader, Jerry King has always brought Athens together to achieve many worthy goals, including the opening of a new city hall that is modern and meeting the needs of the citizens of that community and the Texas Freshwater Fishery Center, which is truly a wonderful showplace facility for Athens and east Texas that helps educate numerous tourists and school children on the wonders of nature and the environment and our freshwater fish.

He has helped revitalize downtown Athens, Texas. Mr. Speaker, at a time when many small towns in rural America and rural Texas have seen a decline, they have seen their glory days pass them up, downtown Athens is vibrant, it is alive, it is well, thanks to the leadership of Jerry King. It shows that Athens' glory days are in the present and in the future, not in the past.

Mayor King has also worked to improve Athens' transportation infrastructure through the new loop that is just vital to economic development in that part of east Texas. Mayor King has led and won the support on so many different programs and projects that are important to the people of Athens. This is truly a record of accomplishment.

Undoubtedly because of it, Mayor King is recognized as a strong and visionary leader throughout all of east Texas; and elected officials throughout East Texas, including myself, have sought his advice, his counsel, his wisdom.

Mr. Speaker, he is upbeat, he is optimistic, he is forward thinking and he is a good listener; and through his efforts he has made Athens, Texas, a better place to live, to learn, to work, and to raise a family.

Mr. Speaker, Jerry King has not only demonstrated his dedication to public service through his tenure as mayor but through his volunteer service and enthusiastic involvement in community organizations as well. Jerry has always led by example. He served as the president of the Henderson County YMCA, the president of the Athens Noon Kiwanis Club, the president of the Athens Teenage Baseball Association, the vice president of the Chamber of Commerce, a board member of the Athens Industrial Foundation, and the list goes on and on and on.

In his professional career, Jerry King has undertaken a noble life, that of educator. His life is one about improving education and strengthening our institutions of higher learning.

After graduating from Commerce High School, Jerry King attended Texas A&M University at Commerce, where he received a bachelor's degree in economics, a master's degree in business administration, and a doctorate in education.